

## Gael-Ionad Uí Néill

(Irish Language Community Hub)

Presentation to MUDC  
Thursday 15 Feb 2024

*Cairde Uí Néill*  
*Teanga Bheo, Pobal Beo*



## Cé hiad Cairde Uí Néill?

(Who are Cairde Uí Néill?)

- Irish Language Voluntary community Group
- Founded 1992
- Charities Commission Registered 2016
- Serving Coalisland/Clonoe Parishes & Surrounding Areas in Mid Ulster



## Stair Chairde Uí Néill?

(Where have we come from?)

### **Irish Medium Education (IM):**

- Established first Irish Language School in Tyrone 1992
- Sustained Gaelscoil Uí Néill financially for 3 years via fundraising until the Nursery and Primary school received official recognition from Dept. Of Education
- Continued to provide Financial Support for Irish Medium Education i.e. purchase of classroom mobiles and facilities
- Developed Prenursery (Naiscoil Bheag) and Social Services registered Afterschools (Iarscoil) services providing employment for 3 full-time workers - eg

### **Community Engagement:**

- Operating in an area of social deprivation, Cairde Uí Néill collaborates with the Neighbourhood Renewal initiative to deliver Irish Language Classes aimed at improving outcomes for residents within the community.

## Stair Chairde Uí Néill?

(Where have we come from?)

### **Expansion of Objectives:**

- Over time, Cairde Uí Néill broadened its goals to encompass the promotion of the Irish language for learners & speakers at all levels across the local community. Irish Language Development Officer (ILDO) employed under the Foras na Gaeilge Irish in the Community Schemes:
  - Scéim Pobal Gaeilge (SPG) 2011-2020
  - Scéim Forbartha Líonra Gaeilge (SFLG) 2021-present

### **Accountability and All-Ireland Recognition!**

- The ILDO's work overseen by Cairde Uí Néill sub-committee & monitored/reported to Foras na Gaeilge on a quarterly basis.
- Cairde Uí Néill submits comprehensive reports to the annual Comórtas Ghlór na nGael All-Ireland competition, where it has received National Prizes for its quality, breadth, and sustainability in local provision.



## **Cad é a dhéanann muid? Cúram Leanaí** (What do we provide? Child Provision )

- **An Naiscoil Bheag** – Premursery for 3 year olds
- **Iarscoil Uí Néill** - Afterschool for primary age pupils -- registered and inspected by Social Services
- **Other Support Initiatives:**
  - 'An Club Bricfesta' - Breakfast Club
  - Maidín Caife – Coffee mornings for Parent & Toddlers
- **Cultural and Educational Events:**
  - Feis Oileáin agus Cluaine – Primary and Secondary school levels
  - Tuairimí debating competition
  - An Rang is Gaelaí - The most Irish speaking Class
  - Scoil Spreagtha – ILDO working in partnership with Gael Tinn across local Primary schools

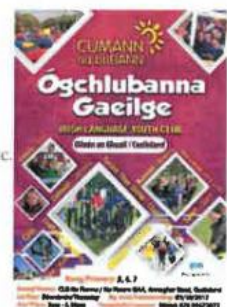


## Cad é a dhéanann muid? - Idir Shean & Óg

(What do we provide? Both Young and Old)

### Cultural and Educational Events for Youth:

- Collaborate with Fóram na nÓg - youth club development / adventure days / Youth Leader Development to enhancing young people's recreational opportunities through Irish
- Lá Gaelige at local GAA clubs' summer camps
- Campa Samhraidh Uí Néill - 2 week All-Irish Summer camp
- Club Scrúduithe - Exam classes and prep for local GCSE and AS/A Level students
- Cainteanna agus Forbairt Pearsanta an Duine – youth talks and presentations on areas such as Online Safety etc.





## Cad é a dhéanann muid? - Idir Shean & Óg

(What do we provide? Both Young and Old)

### • **Community Engagement and Adult Learning:**

- Adult learner classes and strong ties with Ulster University Diploma/Degree/Masters courses in the Irish Language
- Gaeilge sa bhaile – Irish in the Home classes for families of pupils in IM schools and wider afield
- Pop Up Gaeltacht, Conversation Circle, Quizzes & Guest Lectures
- Club Amhránaíochta Singing club, SIÚIL Walking Club, Léigh Leat Reading Group, An Paidrín Prayer group
- Trips to the Gaeltacht regions

### • **Family and Community Events:**

- Cairde Uí Néill organizes family-oriented events, such as children's discos, dinners for religious ceremonies, street festivals like Féasta Sráide, and St. Patrick's Day celebrations, Santa Dash
- Family picnic days, Interactive workshops such as Irish Harp Day and Family Storytelling events with children's writers such as Máirc Zephf



## Cad a dhéanann muid? Pobal na Gaeilge

(What do we provide? Local Community)

- **Promotion of Irish in the community:**
  - GAA Forum & Fondúireacht Sheosaimh Mhic Dhoncha
  - Established Lá na Gaeilge at Meadh Thír Eoghain with Coalisland/Clonoe Comhaltas
  - ILDO has strong working ties with Council Irish Language Officers
  - Gradaim Gnó - Irish in the business community



## Srianta ar ár gcuid Solathair? (Challenges to overcome?)

### Deficiencies/Inefficiencies in Current Service Provision:

- Lack of Permanent Facility
- Restricted Class Availability & Inadequate ICT and internet access
- Venue Limitations for Events
- Youth Club Challenges
- Examination Preparation Constraints
- Accessibility Issues with the office for the Language Development Officer
- Despite these challenges, Cairde Uí Néill remains proud of its achievements in service provision, community uptake, program visibility, and outreach to users of all ages

## **Cad chuige 'Gael Ionad Uí Néill'?** (Why do we need the Irish Language Community Hub?)

### **Impact of no new centre!**

- Risk of Programmes Ceasing due to closer of current facilities on Gaelscoil Uí Néill once new school opens in Gortgonis
- Youth Club Constraints: Lack of a central facility will leave youth provision unfulfilled despite high demand.
- Adult Language Class Challenges
- Accessibility Concerns: Current office facilities for the Language Development Officer are inaccessible, hindering community access to support services; new facilities at the proposed site would alleviate these concerns and improve community access.

### **How the centre helps the community!**

- Addressing Deprivation in location featured in the top 10 deprivation areas' of NI
- Health and Environmental Activities
- Support Services: vital support for parents and young children, addressing isolation issues, especially among single-parent families
- Boosting Confidence: Irish language engagement boosts self-esteem and confidence, with the Láirionad serving as a hub to combat deprivation in the community.
- Positive Impact of New Gaelscoil: The proximity of the new Gaelscoil to the Láirionad site will further contribute to reducing deprivation figures in the area.
- Combating Loneliness & Mental Health: range of activities on offer will combat depression, raise self-esteem, and foster friendships, expanding participation.
- Affordable Childcare: Naiscoil Bheag and Iarscoil provide low-cost childcare for low-income families in the area, further addressing socio-economic challenges.
- Forms part of the Councils strategy

## **Gael-Ionad Uí Néill - ár dTochaí!?** (Irish Language Community Hub – Our Future?)

- Very important for achieving Lónra Language Planning status for this part of Mid Ulster.
- Central base to integrate and grow the Irish language community – one of the most concentrated areas for Irish speakers in the north according to the last census yet no central base to call 'Baile.'
- It will house all of our activities: Development Office; Prenursery; Afterschool; Café; Youth Club; Drop-in centre; Classes; Talks; Conversation Circle; Singing Group, Walking Group al...
- Re-generation of a derelict building and adds to Council's current work to reinvigorate Coalisland Canal area.



## Tacaíocht ó Chomhairle Ceantair Lár Uladh? (How can Mid Ulster Council help?)

- Cairde Uí Néill have successfully secured Letter of Offer for £198k to purchase building & grounds from Dept of Communities under Indigenous Languages Capital Fund.
- Cairde Uí Néill have successfully secured matched funding for £150k from Ciste Infheistíochta na Gaeilge to help with purchase and initial basic renovation of building and grounds.
- Additional matched funding available from Ciste Infheistíochta na Gaeilge of £50k dependent on Cairde Uí Néill securing a further £50k. A Letter of Offer from council for £50k automatically secures Cairde Uí Néill the matched funding from Ciste - without this – the project is in danger of not happening!
- This is a key project in terms of Irish Language and Community Development both for Cairde Uí Néill and for the council's own language strategy.



## An dtig libh cuidiú? (Can you help?)

### Projected Project Costs

- £198,000 purchase of facility
  - £202,000 projected costs of renovation
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- £400,000 total project value

**CURRENT SHORTFALL OF  
£100,000 IN SECURED FUNDING  
BUT £100,000 MATCHED  
FUNDING WAITING TO BE  
CLAIMED**

### Current Funding Secured

- £150,000 DCAL
- £150,000 matched Ciste funding
- **£50,000 Comhairle Ceantair Lár Uladh?**
- **£50,000 matched Ciste funding**

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- £400,000 total project value

**£400,000 REGENERATION PROJECT  
WILL BE SECURED WITH 50K  
SUPPORT FROM COUNCIL**





